

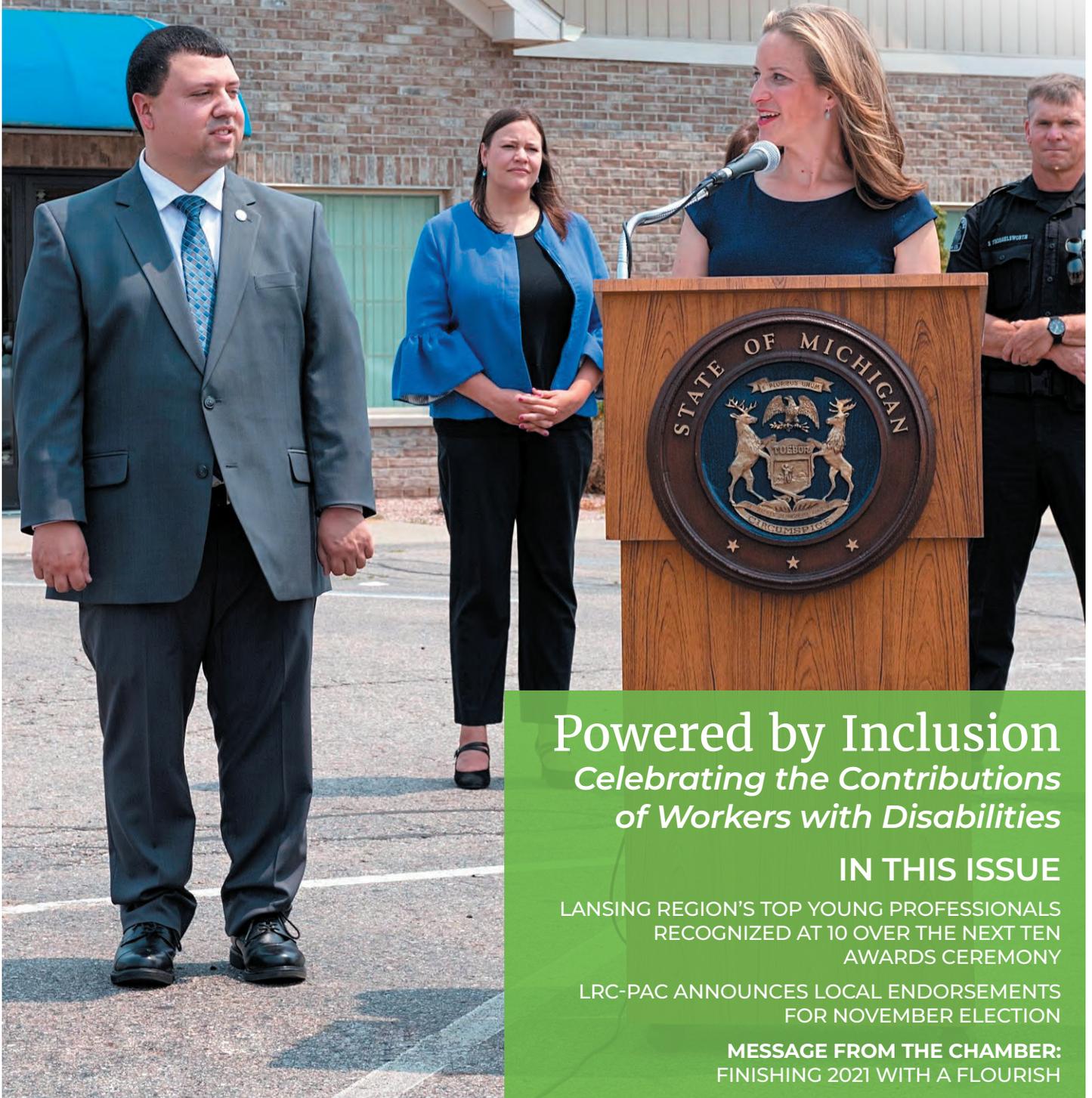
FOCUS

Secretariat

THE MONTHLY BUSINESS NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE
LANSING REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

OCTOBER 2021

EXPRESSOS.COM



Powered by Inclusion *Celebrating the Contributions of Workers with Disabilities*

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Leadership Circle investors are proven business and community leaders. We value their commitment and applaud their efforts to strengthen our region with their leadership and appreciate the important role they play in advancing our organization.

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[Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce](https://www.youtube.com/LansingRegionalChamber)

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Finishing the Year with a Flourish

While the ever-changing nature of the Covid-19 pandemic continues to impact our daily lives, it is equally clear that most people are determined to resume business and personal activities in as close to normal manner as safely possible. People are returning to offices, and students, teachers, and staff are back in school. Downtown business districts are seeing increased activity. Football stadiums, entertainment venues, restaurants, and recreational facilities are near capacity.

As we look ahead to the remainder of 2021, the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC)'s calendar of events reflects the desire to resume in person connections and a renewed energy to advance issues important to the Greater Lansing region.

It would be an understatement to say that we are excited to mark the return of the Lansing Economic Club as an in-person event. We learned during the annual dinner event in June that our members are anxious to be together again. The Lansing Economic Club has become the premier monthly networking event in the region, and we were thrilled to relaunch our first in-person Lansing Economic Club with a panel discussion focused on Michigan's agriculture economy on Sept. 14. The feedback we have received has been overwhelmingly positive. We look forward to our programs for the balance of the year, starting with Neogen CEO John Adent on Oct. 18, the Celebration of Regional Growth Awards on Nov. 9 and the annual economic forecast program on Dec. 7.

Fall is also election season, and this year, our region features critical local elections in the cities of Lansing and East Lansing. Last month's FOCUS Magazine highlighted information from a poll the LRCC commissioned to identify the top issues on voters' minds. I would also direct your attention to this month's magazine in which we identify the candidates the LRCC has endorsed for the Mayor of Lansing and city council races in Lansing and East Lansing. It is imperative that we elect public officials who align with the issues that matter to voters and who embrace solutions that will encourage job growth and investment in our region.

A top issue on the minds of our LRCC members for the past few years have been attracting and retaining talent. This fall, the LRCC maintains its emphasis on key talent initiatives in the region. In September, we were pleased to again recognize the top young professionals in the region at the 10 Over the Next Ten Awards. In October, Leadership Lansing begins its seventh year with another cohort of outstanding business leaders. Also, this month's FOCUS Magazine cover story shines the spotlight on another important piece of the talent puzzle – the value that people with disabilities bring to our regional workforce. I strongly encourage all employers, large and small, to review the cover story, which identifies valuable resources to help connect your business to some amazing talent that can add rich value to your organization.

Covid-19 remains a part of our world, but so does the entrepreneurial drive that makes this region great. That spirit will prevail as we relaunch, reconnect, and move forward together. ●



TIM DAMAN
PRESIDENT AND CEO
LANSING REGIONAL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Covid-19 remains a part of our world, but so does the entrepreneurial drive that makes this region great. That spirit will prevail as we relaunch, reconnect, and move forward together.

October 2021

10/5 BUSINESS EDUCATION SERIES – CYBER INSURANCE
Tuesday, Oct. 5 from 8 to 9:30 a.m.
Lansing Regional Chamber Capital Insurance Board Room | 500 E. Michigan Ave., Suite 200, Lansing

Global cybercrime is compromising the financial solvency of local small businesses at a blindingly fast pace. No cyber security strategy is complete unless all foundational pillars are in place, including cyber liability insurance. Yet, cyber insurance coverage itself is highly varied across providers as the market struggles to keep pace with rapidly evolving risks. Attend this business education seminar to learn more about specific cyber insurance protections to seek out for your small business.

10/7 DOWNTOWN LANSING GRUB CRAWL
Thursday, Oct. 7 from 5 to 8 p.m.
Washington Square – Downtown Lansing

Presented by the Lansing Board of Water & Light, the LRCC’s Grub Crawl is back and taking over downtown Lansing! Downtown Lansing restaurants will be serving up great grub and drink specials. This celebration of food and drink is an excellent opportunity to support our local community and grow awareness of the restaurants in the Greater Lansing area. Use this event to get together with friends, enjoy a night out or provide a bonding opportunity for your corporate team.

10/18 LANSING ECONOMIC CLUB
Monday, Oct. 18 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center | 219 S. Harrison Road, East Lansing

John Adent, CEO and president, NEOGEN, will discuss his current role at NEOGEN and how under his leadership the company continues to grow around the world.

Virtual Business Roundtables

Virtual roundtables allow community and government leaders an opportunity to share what is going on in the community and determine ways to advise the tri-county region.

Delta Township - Eaton County
 Wednesday, Oct. 6 from 9 to 10 a.m.

Lansing – Delhi Township
 Wednesday, Oct. 13 from 9 to 10 a.m.

East Lansing - Meridian Township
 Wednesday, Oct. 20 from 9 to 10 a.m.

10/19 OCTOBER MEMBER MIXER
Tuesday, Oct. 19 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Carbidex | 4520 N. Grand River Ave., Lansing

Hosted by local cannabis company, Carbidex, the October Member Mixer will provide attendees the unique opportunity to get a behind-the-scenes look at the budding cannabis industry in mid-Michigan. Tours of the cultivation center will be provided. Food will be provided by Morton’s Fine Catering.

10/27 UNDERSTANDING AND ADDRESSING IMPLICIT BIAS AND MICROAGGRESSIONS IN THE WORKPLACE
Wednesday, Oct. 27 from 10 to 11:30 a.m.
Lansing Regional Chamber Capital Insurance Board Room | 500 E. Michigan Ave., Suite 200, Lansing

During this workshop, participants will enhance their awareness and understanding of bias in the workplace and how biases manifest as microaggressions and macroaggressions. Participants will understand how to recognize their own biases and learn strategies to eliminate biases in organizations.



The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) hosts numerous events monthly, from Member Mixers to Lansing Economic Club programs. The events and programming provide valuable content and information and give members unique opportunities to connect and network. The LRCC also continues to host weekly roundtables virtually for business, community, and government leaders to provide updates and share what is going on in their community.

The LRCC encourages members to check their email, follow LRCC social media channels, and visit the **LRCC website** for the most updated information on upcoming educational offerings and networking opportunities.

Registration is available on the LRCC website.

Thank You Renewing Members

American Red Cross-
Mid-Michigan Chapter
Baryames Cleaners
Capital Area District Library-
Administration
CASE Credit Union
Cask & Company
Clark Construction Company, Inc.
Clean Team USA
Clinton County Board of
Commissioners
Communities In Schools of Michigan
Consumers Concrete Corporation
Crandell Brothers Trucking
Crippen Auto Mall
DC Engineering, PC
Dickinson Wright PLLC
Don's Auto Fleet
Elieff Brothers Roofing & Exteriors

Enbridge
Greater Lansing Food Bank
Greater Lansing United Nations
Association
Grewal Law
Hacker-King-Sherry Agency, Inc.
Ingham Health Plan Corporation
Innovare (formerly Corporate
Office Interiors)
Institute for Quality and Innovation
Johnson Sign Company
Junk in the Trunk
Kelley Cawthorne
Kentwood Office Furniture
Lally Group, PC
Michigan Automobile Dealers
Association
Michigan Federation For Children
And Families

MPC Cashway Lumber, Inc.
New York Life Insurance Company
One North Kitchen and Bar
Paramount Coffee
Product Resource Company
Public Sector Consultants
REO Town Apartments
Riverfront Business Center
Siena Accounting
Spicer Group, Inc. - Lansing Area
Staples - Frandor
Susan Combs Coaching &
Consulting, LLC
T.L. Hart, Inc.
TeamLogic IT
U.S. Capital Mortgage
Wolverine Water Treatment Systems/
Michigan Soft Water



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advancedtrainingandconsulting.com

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Grand Ledge, MI 48837

Ellison Brewery & Spirits

(517) 203-5498

ellisonbrewing.com

4903 Dawn Ave., Suite E
East Lansing, MI 48823

Ellison Brewery & Spirits - REO Town Lansing

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ellisonbrewing.com

1314 S. Washington Ave.
Lansing, MI 48910

Hair United

(517) 927 - 0248

hairunitesus.com

515 W. Ionia St.
Lansing, MI 48933

Lansing Promise Foundation

(517) 203-5020

lansingpromise.org

2722 East Michigan Ave., Suite 203
Lansing, MI 48912

Pincanna

(517) 325-0900

pincanna.com

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East Lansing, MI 48823

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203 N Clippert St.
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(517) 507-5037

vandykehorn.com

120 N. Washington Square, Suite 300
Lansing, MI 48933

Chamber Milestones

We'd like to offer a special salute to these great organizations who reached milestone anniversaries as Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) members this month. Thank you for your continued support throughout the years!

A. Dean Watkins - East, Inc.

65 Years

The George F. Eyde Family, LLC

45 Years

Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, P.L.C.

40 Years

C2AE

35 Years

Alro Steel Corporation

30 Years

Hobbs + Black Architects, Inc.

30 Years

Lansing Urgent Care

15 Years

Cottage Gardens

10 Years

Health Care Association of MI

10 Years

Siena Investments

10 Years

Holt & Dimondale Agency

5 Years

Rieth-Riley Construction Co., Inc.

5 Years

LRCC members have unparalleled access to company and staff profiles on the LRCC website. To access and update this information at any point, visit lansingchamber.org and enter your username and password. If you have not yet logged onto the site, please follow the simple password reset instructions.

Call (517) 487-6340 with any questions.

LRC-PAC Announces Local Endorsements for November General Election

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Political Action Committee (LRC-PAC) has announced its endorsements for the Nov. 2 general election ballot. The LRC-PAC is the political action committee of the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce, representing over 1,100 businesses in the tri-county region. The objective of the LRC-PAC is to elect or re-elect pro-business candidates to local, state, and federal offices.

“The November election will play a large part in shaping the future direction of the cities of Lansing and East Lansing,” said Kevin Shaw, chair, LRC-PAC Board of Directors. “We have endorsed a strong group of candidates who have demonstrated they share our vision for building a stronger region and support policies that will create more jobs and investment in our region.”

The LRC-PAC recently commissioned Greenlee Consulting Services to survey 300 likely voters in Lansing and East Lansing. Voters in Lansing identified public safety as their No. 1 concern, followed by jobs and the economy and roads. The poll also showed that 37.7 percent of voters feel the City of Lansing is on the wrong track, while 34.7 percent say the city is on the right track. In East Lansing, voters identified business corridors/neighborhoods as their No. 1 concern, followed by jobs and the economy and Covid-19 recovery. Forty percent of voters feel the City of East Lansing is on the right track, while 37.7 percent say it is on the wrong track.

The LRC-PAC’s endorsement process includes a review of a candidate’s past performance, a written questionnaire,

and, in some cases, an in-person interview. Only after this process is completed and a vote of the LRC-PAC Board of Directors is taken can a candidate be endorsed and be considered for financial support.

“The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce is pleased to see a broad, diverse slate of candidates who are representing our business community and residents,” said Steve Japinga, vice president of public affairs, Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce. “The tough decisions that will have to be made requires elected officials who are willing to work with a spirit of collaboration to seek bold, innovative solutions to the challenges faced by the government.” ●



Schor



Spadafore



Brown



Garza



Caldwell



Grigsby



Bollman



Bacon

The bipartisan list of LRC-PAC endorsed candidates includes:

LANSING

Mayor

- Andy Schor

Council Member At-Large

- Peter Spadafore
- Jeffrey Brown

Council Member Ward 2

- Jeremy Garza

Council Member Ward 4

- Elvin Caldwell

EAST LANSING

Four-Year Term City Council Seats

- Chuck Grigsby
- Dan Bollman

Two-Year Term City Council Seat

- Ron Bacon



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Lansing Region’s Top Young Professionals Recognized at 10 Over the Next Ten Awards

The 15th annual 10 Over the Next Ten Awards were held on Wednesday, Sept. 22 at the Graduate Hotel in East Lansing. This event recognizes Greater Lansing’s top 10 young professionals expected to contribute significantly to our community over the next ten years. The event was presented by Independent Bank and co-hosted by the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce and Lansing 5:01. The event Wellness Sponsor was the University Club, who provided a free one-year membership to each award recipient.

THE 2021 10 OVER THE NEXT TEN AWARD RECIPIENTS INCLUDE:



Barker

MiChaela Barker is the community action network coordinator for the Ingham County Health Department. In 2017, she became an entrepreneur and started her own company, Melanin in Medicine, which focuses on providing representation for the BIPOC community within healthcare via apparel, accessories, and mental health dream



Caldwell

Elvin Caldwell serves as a legislative affairs consultant, closely monitoring, researching, and assisting clients in developing public policy strategies. His most fulfilling professional accomplishment came when he worked as an educator and helped middle school students launch a water drive. He empowered students and taught them to be proactive and engage the business and at-large communities. Elvin is also the owner of the

journals. Her firm has given out multiple small business grants and helped create the Greater Lansing Black Business Directory. MiChaela has continuously poured back into the community. She has served through Les Meres et Debutantes of Greater Lansing, Jack and Jill Greater Lansing Chapter, Chi Epsilon Omega of Alpha Kappa Alpha, and the Melanated Business Alliance of Greater Lansing. MiChaela has a Master of Public Health: Healthcare Management from Yale University.

Umbrella Sock Company, a Lansing apparel company that has provided thousands of dollars to organizations in the community. Elvin is an executive board member of the Capital Area Housing Partnership and the recipient of the Lansing Champion award and Lansing Boys and Girls Club Coach's award. He has a bachelor's in history from Kalamazoo College.



Daniels

Brian Daniels is the founder of emPOWER Lansing, a boxing and fitness studio. He is a U.S. Army veteran and Purple Heart recipient, having been injured in an IED attack in Iraq. A Lansing native and graduate of Grand Ledge High School, Brian is driven by a desire to help people find their strength and become the best versions of themselves. Brian says emPOWER Lansing is not just a

fitness studio, but a movement. They do more than teach classes. They preach, promote, and provide an environment of equality and unity in the community. Opening emPOWER on Lansing's eastside also allowed Brian to be part of the resurgence of Michigan Avenue. His passion for the community led him to become a member of the Lansing Parks Board of Directors. Through volunteer work at emPOWER, Brian has also worked with victims of assault and trafficking. His dream is to use his community service to help Lansing become the best version of itself. He also hopes to run for public office.



DePrekel

Mallory DePrekel serves as CEO/state director of Communities In Schools (CIS) of Michigan. This non-profit organization aims to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. Under her leadership, CIS of Michigan has grown from two full-time employees and four contractors to 55 full-time staff members in just

three years. She is active with the Junior League of Lansing, Michigan Afterschool Association, and a graduate of the Leadership Lansing program. Mallory has a bachelor's degree from Michigan State University, a master's in public service management from DePaul University. She is currently attending Harvard Kennedy School, seeking an executive certificate in non-profit leadership.

Justin Hewson works as the business services manager of loan operations for MSU Federal Credit Union. During the Covid pandemic, Justin was tasked with leading his commercial lending team while working remotely, implementing and delivering the Paycheck Protection Program, and implementing a new loan origination



Hewson

software. Justin is active in the community, currently serving as board chair and member of the philanthropy committee of the mid-Michigan Chapter of the American Red Cross. He also serves as vice-chair of East Lansing's Downtown Management Board. Justin is a graduate of Okemos High School, Lansing Community College, and Michigan State University.



Kirk

Nate Kirk is the assistant vice president, mortgage loan officer for the mid-Michigan Market of Commercial Bank. In just seven years, Nate has risen from a part-time position as a bank teller and customer service representative to his current role. He feels a deep sense of fulfillment at being able to help individuals and families realize their dream of homeownership. Nate also

takes great pride in his role as a volunteer, currently serving as a board member and housing educator for the Capital Area Housing Partnership. He is also currently serving as a board member and vice president of the Meridian Area Business Association. He has also served as a board member and treasurer of the Lansing Women's Council of Realtors, and enjoys another of his passions as a volunteer youth football coach. Nate has a bachelor's in political science and a bachelor's in philosophy from Albion College.



McCalla

Quincie McCalla is a registered financial representative with Modern Woodmen of America. In her first year at Modern Woodmen, she reached all four stages of MWA's Sure Start Awards. She also qualified for the 2021 National Sales Conference, took seven licensing tests, and received her Fraternal Insurance Counselor Designation. This past May, she finished in the top ten

of life writers in the country. Quincie enjoys giving back to the community and has served with Sisters of Service through which she has volunteered at the City Rescue Mission, and assembled face shields for first responders. She is currently the vice president and incoming president for the National Association of Career Women, trustee for the Sundried Music festival, and a committee member for Impression 5 Science Center's 50th anniversary celebration. Quincie has a bachelor's degree in marketing from Olivet Nazarene University.



Nominations for the 2022 10 Over the Next Ten Awards will open midsummer 2022



Breina Pugh serves as the community relations manager for the Lansing Board of Water & Light (BWL). In that role, Breina works with community, neighborhood, and non-profit leaders on issues important to BWL. Among the projects she has led at BWL were overseeing the installation of community art at the new central substation and leading the 2019 chili cook-off competition. Breina

Pugh

has served on the Eaton County Humane Society Board of Directors and has been involved with Junior Achievement. Currently, she serves on the board of directors for the Old Town Commercial Association, where she leads all social media/communications efforts. She is also a member of the ATHENA WIN Board of Directors. Breina has a bachelor's degree in political science from Alma College.



Brian Sapita is the director of government affairs for the Michigan Pharmacists Association. Among his professional accomplishments, Brian worked in partnership with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to create a "Naloxone Weekend" where pharmacies across the state could give away free doses of Naloxone to any patient who requested it. Naloxone

Sapita

is a drug that counteracts the effects of an overdose and getting into the hands of the community will save countless lives. He is a member and benefactor of the Capital Area Rugby Foundation, which hosts youth rugby clinics for children 6-11 years old, has a yearly park clean-up event, and supports men's and women's teams in mid-Michigan. Brian graduated from Grand Valley State University with a degree in political science.



Kirstyn Waldron serves as corporate philanthropy manager for Jackson National Life Insurance Company. Kirstyn has a passion for giving back and helping those in need. In her role, she leads the employee volunteer program, Jackson in Action, and directs corporate contributions within the Lansing community. Kirstyn led an internal fundraiser at Jackson in support of the Jackson Volunteer

Waldron

Center at the new Greater Lansing Food Bank Warehouse. She is also a graduate of the Leadership Lansing program. Kirstyn volunteers her time by co-chairing the Junior Achievement Bowling Committee, serving on the Big Brothers Big Sisters Bowl for Kids' Sake Committee, and the Elie's Race Committee. Kirstyn possesses a bachelor's degree in journalism from Michigan State University. ●



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Michigan Rise: Planting the Seeds for High-Tech Startups

A program provided by the Michigan State University (MSU) Foundation in partnership with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and the Michigan Strategic Fund is helping launch technology startups in Michigan and assisting in commercializing innovative technologies. The Michigan Rise Pre-Seed Fund III provides early-stage funding to help Michigan high-tech startups gain greater access to technology support to reach the commercial market.



Wesley

“We provide that early necessary gap funding to help companies get commercial traction and support them with value-added services,” said Jeff Wesley, executive director, Michigan Rise. “That startup funding is critical for early-stage ventures.”

Since its formation in August 2020, Michigan Rise has invested \$3.7 million in startup funds to 26 companies in the high-tech, high-growth arena.

“Some of the spaces we support are areas that are very important to the state of Michigan,” said Wesley. “Advanced mobility, advanced manufacturing, IT, life sciences, agtech, alternative energy – those areas where the state feels there will be great opportunities for innovation, job growth, and economic impact here in Michigan.”

Michigan Rise can invest up to \$250,000 per company. The average investment has been about \$140,000 per company to date. The pre-seed funding has resulted in an additional \$100 million in funds that have been leveraged through other investments secured by the companies.

Michigan Rise has invested in two companies in the past year: Greenmark Bio, based in East Lansing and 86 Repairs based in Grand Rapids. Greenmark Bio recently received approval from the FDA to market its first product, a preventative dental care product called Lumicare Caries Detection Rinse, as a 510K Class II device and plans to begin sales of the product in the fall of this year.

One of Michigan Rise’s earliest investments at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic was 86 Repairs. Disrupting the \$26 billion restaurant equipment repair and maintenance industry, 86 Repairs automates the end-to-end repair and maintenance process for

restaurants and provides actionable insights to improve back-of-house operations.

Another success story is that of ADHD Online, a leader in telehealth diagnosis and treatment for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), ADHD Online aims to grow its services to include diagnosis of other behavioral health issues, such as anxiety and depression, while continuing to build its network throughout the country.

In addition to pre-seed funding, Michigan Rise provides several other services to assist companies in which it invests, including networking, connections to talent, strategy, marketing, finance, and deep science support through the team at Spartan Innovations.

“I am really proud of the team and what we are building here in mid-Michigan,” said Wesley. “To have the startup ecosystem that we have based in East Lansing is a positive thing for the region as we help drive new innovation, create jobs and expand new commercial opportunities.” ●

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Ingham County's Most Recent Kids Count in Michigan Data Released

Kids Count in Michigan is part of a broad national effort to measure the well-being of children at the state and local levels. Funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, this state data provided by the Michigan League for Public Policy (MLPP), provides policy analysis based on evidence and shines a spotlight on pressing issues to improve programs and policies for children and families.



Key areas the data is focused on includes Population, Economic Security, Education, Health and Safety, and Family and Community. The latest report compares data from 2010 to 2020 unless otherwise noted. Areas in which Ingham County has seen improvement are children ages 0-17

living in poverty, three-and four-year-olds attending preschool and students graduating on time. Areas in which the county fell since 2010 included less than adequate prenatal care, the number of children in families being investigated for child abuse/neglect, and the deaths of young adults ages 18-24.

“Kids Count provides the best available data for us to look at trends in education, economic security, health and community well-being,” notes Michelle Nicholson, Executive Director of Early Childhood Services at Ingham Intermediate School District (Ingham ISD). “Of particular concern is the worsening trends in health and safety for children. While the most recent report shows a slight improvement in confirmed victims of child abuse and neglect, and out-of-home placements, this is still an area of great concern. We need to consider access to opportunity for the adults in the children’s lives, as well as the children when trying to improve well-being,” Nicholson also noted.

According to the MLPP, “a child’s well-being should not be determined by their race, place, or income, but data shows that this is the reality. That is why our racial equity lens considers how policy decisions help or hinder outcomes. We also consider access to opportunity for the adults in kids’ lives, as well as the children, when working to improve well-being.”

Ingham ISD provides a variety of programs that can assist families in the areas of early childhood such as Early On, Great Parents Great Start, Great Start Collaborative, Great Start Readiness and Early Childhood Special Education services. Information and contacts for these programs are available on the Ingham ISD website.

Ingham Intermediate School District offers program and services to staff and students in the districts of Dansville, East Lansing, Haslett, Holt, Lansing, Leslie, Mason, Okemos, Stockbridge, Waverly, Webberville, and Williamston. For more information, visit inghamisd.org.

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Courtesy: Ariniko Artistry



Evening of Excellence Celebrates Downtown Lansing Rock Stars

On Wednesday, Aug. 25, Downtown Lansing, Inc. held its annual awards celebration honoring their rock star volunteers, business owners, and community partners. While the extreme heat caused a quick location change, it was a wonderful night to celebrate the downtown community together!

2021 AWARDEES INCLUDED:

- **We Built this City Building Rehab Award:** Summit Comics & Games
- **Best New Artist Award (Best New Businesses):** Social Sloth Café & Bakery along with Goodfellas Bagel Deli
- **Downtown Legend Award:** Kositchek's
- **Gamechanger Award:** Najeema Iman

- **Downtown Dreamer Award:** Michelle Massey
- **Best Collaboration:** Consumers Energy Foundation
- **Downtown Promotions Rock Star:** Tina Nguyen
- **Business Team Rock Star:** Jesse Flores
- **Downtown Champion:** Guillermo Flores
- **Downtown Hall of Fame Award (Volunteer of the Year):** Kristi James

Congratulations to all award winners and thank you to those who work every day to build a strong sense of community and cultivate unique experiences while fostering passion and pride in all those who call downtown Lansing home! ●

Chamber Events: Your Connection to Professional Development and Networking Success

From professional development to networking, the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce hosts events to fit every need. A full list of events is located on the Chamber Calendar on the LRCC website.



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Lansing Regional Chamber Joins Hispanic Leaders in Celebrating National Hispanic Heritage Month

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) has again joined the Greater Lansing Hispanic Chamber and Cafecito Caliente to celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month. Each year, Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15 by celebrating the contributions and importance of Hispanics and Latinos to the United States and those American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America, and South America.

“We are proud to stand with our partners in the Hispanic community to celebrate the enormous contributions our friends in the Hispanic community continue to make in our region and all across the country,” said Tim Daman, president & CEO, LRCC. “We continue to be inspired by the hard-working Hispanic business owners and entrepreneurs who are creating jobs and contributing to a vibrant, growing community in Greater Lansing.

The Hispanic Heritage observance began in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon Johnson. It was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover a 30-day period starting on Sept. 15 and ending on Oct. 15. It was enacted into law on Aug. 17, 1988, on the approval of Public Law 100- 402. The theme of this year’s celebration is Esperanza: A Celebration of Hispanic Heritage and Hope.



“The theme of celebrating Hispanic heritage and hope is appropriate because it challenges us to reflect on the contributions Hispanics have made in the past and will continue to make in the future,” said Sein Paul Benavides, owner of Cafecito Caliente. “Hope encourages us that our future is bright especially if we stay stronger together.”

“Hispanic Americans have been integral to the prosperity of the U.S.,” said Greater Lansing Hispanic Chamber of Commerce President and Vice President, Chaz Carrillo and Elizabeth Hernandez. “Their contributions to the nation are immeasurable, and they embody the best of American values. The Hispanic-American community has left an indelible mark on our regional culture and economy.”

For information on local celebrations of National Hispanic Heritage Month, visit the Greater Lansing Hispanic Chamber Facebook page: facebook.com/glhchamber, and the Cafecito Caliente website: cafecitocaliente.com.



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Lansing-based Peckham has six business units including; manufacturing, call centers, supply chain solutions, environmental services, contract packaging and Peckham Farms.

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Celebrating the Contributions of Workers with Disabilities

Since the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed in 1990, workers with disabilities have made inroads in society and specifically in the jobs market. In the past 31 years, job opportunities have gradually increased for workers with disabilities. Society has increasingly begun to recognize the contributions those with disabilities bring to the workforce and the value they make within organizations.

“We all learn from each other and if we are only surrounded by people who have the same skills as we do, we don’t learn as much,” said Jo Sinha, CEO, Peckham. “We purposely seek to build a workforce that is diverse and inclusive and includes persons with disabilities which impacts the work environment and helps make it more productive.”

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month. While there is much progress to celebrate, the national recovery from the pandemic threatens to stall some of the gains disabled workers have come to

realize in the job market. Disabled workers, particularly disabled women, were hit harder by the pandemic than nondisabled workers. During the pandemic, unemployment for disabled workers hit 18.9 percent compared to 14.3 percent for non-disabled workers. Disabled workers are also more likely to be part-time. The pandemic has forced more disabled people to involuntarily move to part-time, which in many cases results in a loss of employee benefits and unstable schedules.

TURNING THE PANDEMIC INTO NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Lansing-based Peckham is a nonprofit vocational rehabilitation organization that provides job opportunities for persons with significant disabilities and other barriers to employment. Peckham has six business units, including manufacturing, call centers, supply chain solutions, environmental services, contract packaging, and Peckham Farms. Peckham CEO Jo

Sinha says Covid-19 hit team members with compromised immune systems especially hard. Six-hundred Peckham team members were forced to take a voluntary layoff. They were fortunately able to draw unemployment during Covid-19. At the same time, persons with disabilities without compromised immune systems found new opportunities.

“When things started to open up, there was a help wanted sign in every employer’s door,” said Sinha. “That created new opportunities, such as higher wages for persons with disabilities, that we hadn’t seen in quite some time.”

The pandemic has made it clear that remote and hybrid work will be a part of our future for the long term. Many experts view this development as something that will open more opportunities for persons with disabilities. The combination of remote work options and chronic staffing shortages have led more employers to be willing to make the accommodation needed to hire persons with disabilities, which fosters innovation and retention.

“It’s opened up the conversation,” said Rachel Mularz, director of career development and placement services, Selective Case Management, a firm that provides employment services to individuals with disabilities. “Those that have/had barriers and are not able to work a traditional schedule have an opportunity now.”

According to Carrie Rosingana, CEO, Capital Area Michigan Works!, the ability to work remotely and some of the accommodations that employers have made due to Covid has shown that the workplace can accommodate all individuals including persons with disabilities.

“Sometimes there are accommodations that can suit



Caine



Mularz



Rosingana



Sinha



There are 500,000 individuals with disabilities in Michigan. There are 800,000 small businesses in Michigan. If half those small businesses were willing to bring on one or two qualified individuals with disabilities into their organization, disability unemployment would be at the same level as the general population.

working remotely,” said Rosingana. “With a lot of organizations culturally looking at new ways to do business, it has really been an opportunity for us to look at more ways that we can be more inclusive in the practices we have for all individuals.”

ENDING THE STIGMA. EMBRACING DIFFERENCES.

Justin Caine suffered a brain hemorrhage resulting from a cancerous tumor when he was in the fourth grade. Emergency surgery saved his life. Justin was in the hospital for months and had to relearn how to walk, talk and swallow. Justin has overcome the odds associated with his disability, eventually receiving a college degree as he is now a successful businessperson, who employs others with disabilities. Justin says the biggest barrier that persons with disabilities face in terms of employment is overcoming the stigma of having a disability.

“There is a belief that because a person walks or talks differently, or doesn’t walk or talk, that it means they are incapable of doing work at a level that someone without a disability can do,” said Caine. “That’s just not true.”

Sinha says people with mental health challenges face some of the largest stigmas in terms of employment. However, she says Covid may have offered a silver lining in that it has created a greater awareness of and sensitivity to those challenges.

“The impact and isolation of Covid, as well as the uncertainty caused a lot of employers to understand that the emotional health of their workforce is just as important as their physical health,” said Sinha. “That will help reduce some of the barriers for persons with mental illness.”

POWERED BY INCLUSION

Mularz notes that individuals with disabilities often have a unique way of working through barriers, which often fuels innovation, creativity, and efficiency in an organization.

“If persons with disabilities are coming in and saying, ‘I have different ways that I can get things done,’ this may be more efficient than the original process,” said Mularz. “When the modes/processes that are being presented are as inclusive as possible, everyone is going to benefit. It is embracing differences and willingness to say, ‘how can we make it happen and what can we learn from the people we encounter.’”

ADDITIONAL BARRIERS REMAIN

Xavier DeGroat was diagnosed with autism at the age of four and has since faced many obstacles in reaching his potential. Overcoming these obstacles motivated him to help others with autism - and their families - reach their full potential economically, socially, and politically. He is passionate about eradicating injustices and poverty against those with autism through humanitarian work. He founded the Xavier DeGroat Autism Foundation at the beginning of 2018, dedicated to promoting awareness and acceptance of autism. DeGroat says a significant barrier for persons with disabilities, including those on the autism spectrum, is a lack of understanding of the challenges encountered.

“People with autism struggle with language issues like nuance and sarcasm and can experience anxiety when coping with loudness,” said DeGroat. “Communication impediments can lead to misunderstandings in terms of what is expected in the workplace. If they have not had proper training, managers don’t always understand what is going on in the employee’s mind.”

There are numerous barriers that persons with disabilities encounter within the application and pre-screening process, which speaks to the need for increased diversity and sensitivity training within organizations. Mularz notes that managers conducting interviews often don’t have the training to support the organization’s mission of inclusivity.

“We find that a lot, where the CEOs and owners commit to the inclusivity mission, but it stalls because managers working with people directly don’t have the training they need,” said Mularz.

OPENING MORE DOORS

Many employers are hesitant to embrace hiring persons with disabilities, often fearing the complexity of government regulations, and increasing costs for things like workers compensation and unemployment insurance. Rosingana says many employers have a misconception around what is needed to create reasonable accommodations, which are often minor in nature.

Community Resources for Employers

MICHIGAN HAS SEVERAL OUTSTANDING RESOURCES THAT EMPLOYERS CAN TAP INTO TO ASSIST IN BUILDING A MORE INCLUSIVE ORGANIZATION THAT INCLUDES PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.

MICHIGAN REHABILITATION SERVICES (State Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity) is a statewide network of vocational rehabilitation professionals developing creative, customized solutions that meet the needs of individuals and businesses. Learn more at bit.ly/39SLEvG.

BUREAU OF SERVICES FOR BLIND PERSONS (State Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity) provides training and other services that empower blind or visually impaired to achieve employment and independence. Learn more at bit.ly/3AYmXtQ.

PECKHAM, INC. offers a wide range of services to employers to create opportunities for people with disabilities to be successful in your workplace. Learn more at peckham.org/programs-services/employer-services.

CAPITAL AREA DISABILITY NETWORK serves Clinton, Eaton, Ingham, and Shiawassee counties. They combine experience and peer-support in delivering services to people with disabilities and their families. Learn more at dncap.org.

SELECTIVE CASE MANAGEMENT'S innovative approach delivers meaningful growth toward self-sufficiency and independence for people with physical, cognitive, behavioral and socio-economic challenges. Learn more at selectivecase.org.

JOB ACCOMMODATION NETWORK (JAN) is a free, confidential service from the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy that provides individualized accommodation solutions. You can contact JAN by phone at 1-800-1526-7234 (voice), TTY at 1-877-781-9403, or website: askjan.org.

THE ADA TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MANUAL on the employment provisions (Title I) of the ADA is available from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission by calling 1-800-669-3362 (V) or 1-800-800-3302 (TTY) or by visiting bit.ly/3ii5mp9.

Ten regional **DISABILITY AND BUSINESS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTERS** sponsored by the **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY AND REHABILITATION RESEARCH** provide ADA information, training, and technical assistance across the nation. They can be contacted at 1-800-949-4232 or at disabilityinfo.org.



“It could be something like having an adjustable workstation or allowing an individual to be up more often if they need to be moving around,” said Rosingana. “There are not going to be excessive costs. Sometimes when you are thinking about hiring a person with a disability and it comes to accommodation being necessary, the cost is a concern many employers may have. However, it may be one that is unfounded.”

Though there is a learning curve involved, Sinha says there are lots of community resources available to assist, including at Peckham, where employers can access job coaches, obtain help determining appropriate accommodations and even visit a workplace to do job carving, which helps carve out specific steps of a job so that a specific person who

might be able to do most of the job but not all of it could be incorporated into the team.

“All it takes is for someone to reach out to us and let us know they are interested and that they do want to hire people with disabilities,” said Sinha.

When Justin Caine was attending college, he held a part-time job in a local restaurant for several years. He says he was continually passed over for promotions and was relegated to the entry level position because of his disability. Caine says persons with disabilities deserve more opportunities to advance into higher positions in the workplace, so he started an organization called ‘Beyond Our Barriers’ to help connect persons with disabilities to career opportunities and helping more

HOW TO BECOME A MORE INCLUSIVE EMPLOYER

According to Rachel Mularz of Selective Case Management, employers that want to ensure they have an inclusive application process for individuals with disabilities will want to consider the following items:

- 1 Have an accessible web platform that a screen reader can read and include audio.
- 2 Make sure the area for in-person interviews is accessible.
- 3 Promote and honor requests for reasonable accommodations.
- 4 Inform candidates of tests or assessments ahead of time.
- 5 Focus on the essential functions of the job.
- 6 Using person first language.
- 7 Understand that accommodations are not limited to just adjustments to physical equipment or modifications.

“Management and leadership that are recruiting and interviewing benefit from understanding what the Americans with Disabilities Act does to clarify accommodations, as well as accomplishing diversity and sensitivity training; this will help the entire process be more accessible, not just for persons with disabilities but for everyone,” said Mularz.

POWERED BY INCLUSION

people become entrepreneurs with profitable businesses.

“We are not looking to get people jobs at McDonalds,” said Caine. “We want them to get those careers that have benefits that can fund their lives – a life they love.”

Caine says many large corporations are making progress in hiring persons with disabilities in large part because they can afford to have staff to oversee that hiring as part of their diversity, equity, and inclusion. He acknowledges that small businesses face challenges because more time and resources are required to recruit qualified individuals with disabilities than the public. However, when you end up hiring that individual, you’ll be getting one of the hardest working, dedicated worker you’ve ever had.

“There are 500,000 individuals with disabilities in Michigan,” said Caine. “There are 800,000 small businesses in Michigan. If half those small businesses were willing to bring on one of two qualified individuals with disabilities into their organization, disability unemployment would be at the same level as the general population.”

Regardless of the type of disability, Xavier DeGroat says one characteristic is most helpful not only for persons with disabilities but also for everyone in the workforce – patience.

“Don’t over-rush people in the beginning,” said DeGroat. “Be patient and kind. Once you are being kind and smiling at them, they will have better motivation to do a great job.”

“We can learn from each other and we can all work together to figure out, innovate and create new ways of doing things which is only going to benefit employers in the long run,” said Rosingana. “Leaders in organizations need to be willing to say this matters to me, this is why it matters and here is what we are going to do to ensure that our employees have an opportunity to talk about what an inclusive environment can mean to them and contribute to the company culture.” ●

New Traffic Stop Law Aids People With Communication Impediments



Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson, autism advocate Xavier DeGroat and local law enforcement officials celebrate the new traffic stop law that helps people with communication impediments.

Five years ago, a routine traffic stop became an unpleasant experience for Xavier DeGroat, so he decided to do something about that. DeGroat, who is on the autism spectrum, suffered an anxiety attack because of what he describes as a traffic stop that was not a sensory-friendly interaction. DeGroat, the founder of the Xavier DeGroat Autism Foundation, decided to lead an effort that resulted in a new state law that took effect on July 1. The law allows individuals with a communication impediment to having a designation placed on their driving record.

“The legislation was supported 100 percent by the state legislature and signed into law by Governor Whitmer,” said DeGroat. “This will help all people with communications impediments be treated with safety and comfort because law enforcement officials will have a better understanding of how to handle the interactions.”

“Alerting law enforcement to the needs of the citizens they interact with helps ensure the safety and comfort of everyone involved,” said Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson.

DeGroat says the Michigan law is now a model that he expects to set a national trend.

“Other states have reached out to my foundation asking for our help in assisting their efforts to pass a similar law,” said DeGroat.

DeGroat also expects to go to Washington D.C. and meet with President Biden in hopes of getting federal agencies, including the FBI and the law enforcement industry, to follow similar guidelines found in Michigan’s law.

“This can lead to a new national strategy that will allow the designation on the driver’s license to be available upon request for physicians, nurses, physical therapists, or other professionals to help them better relate to and treat patients with communication impediments with respect,” said DeGroat.

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-Mary Breier
Kona Ice Holt/Lansing



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Lansing Regional Chamber Backs Governor Whitmer’s Support of Afghan Refugee Resettlement

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) has joined with other local chambers around Michigan in backing Governor Gretchen Whitmer’s offer of state assistance to resettle men, women, and children fleeing the crisis in Afghanistan.



Whitmer

In a letter to Governor Whitmer, the business group called the offer to assist Afghan refugees “a moral obligation,” stating, *“For a century and a half, Michigan has established a rich legacy as a welcoming, chosen home for individuals from all over the world seeking freedom and economic opportunity. We recognize our state as well-positioned to welcome these individuals and support them as they venture through immigration processes and a new, unknown home nation.”*

“We are all watching the crisis in Afghanistan unfold before our eyes, and it tears at our hearts,” said Tim Daman, president & CEO, LRCC. “We have always been a state and region that opens our arms to people from around the world in times of dire need. This is one of those moments.”

In a statement earlier this year on the contributions of immigrants in the region, the LRCC noted that communities where immigrants live are among the most vibrant in the state, including Lansing.

“Attracting more immigrants and welcoming refugees to our region is an essential component of our economic and workforce development efforts and is key to becoming the world-class region we all desire,” said Daman. “We would be proud to welcome Afghan refugees to our community.” ●

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Greater Lansing's Links To Afghanistan

By: Joseph Hess, former president of the Greater Lansing United Nations Association

The 20-year war in Afghanistan and the recent withdrawal of military activities by the United States and NATO allies have captured the world's media attention over the past several months. For many in Greater Lansing, those events may seem far away and of little concern to local individuals and businesses going about daily activities.



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Greater Lansing Chapter

government in the decades ahead. A more representative form of government will become a necessity for a nation with more than a decade of experience

with a more open society, regardless of its flaws.

The turmoil in Afghanistan and its connections with Greater Lansing are examples of the essential role of the United Nations in promoting peace and international cooperation in an increasingly complex world.

However, deeper reflection and attention to international and local news clearly indicates that we will experience many personal and organizational connections to Afghanistan and its people.

A few examples illustrate the many ways in which that is taking place, building upon activities that have been underway for decades.

- The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce has expressed support for Governor Whitmer's statement that Michigan will actively support the resettlement of Afghan refugees in Michigan. They will join hundreds of Afghans resettled following the 9/11 attack.
- The Refugee Development Center and Catholic Social Services are actively assisting with housing, clothing, and adapting to a new and unfamiliar environment. Individuals and businesses are donating items needed to facilitate the process.
- Educational institutions are playing a pivotal role in preparing Afghan immigrants for entry into the workforce.
- Businesses will continue to be involved with specific skills training to fill employee vacancies.

On the international front, United Nations (U.N.) agencies are keeping their personnel actively engaged in humanitarian projects within Afghanistan. Military veterans and others are volunteering to join the U.N. or other agencies to assist with supporting the internally displaced 60,000 Afghans, in addition to those facing starvation in their traditional communities.

The continuing presence of the U.N. and other humanitarian organizations in Afghanistan will be a strong moderating influence on the Taliban

Please join with the Greater Lansing United Nations Association in celebrating the 76th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations on Oct. 24, 1945. We invite all Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce members to join in the local commemoration on Sunday, Oct. 24 at 4:30 p.m. at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center. Registration is available at gluna.org.



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Courtesy: Shinwon USA

Shinwon USA Expands Operations to Charlotte, Michigan

Growing Auto Manufacturing Supplier Adds New Jobs to Lansing Region's Mobility Industry

Shinwon USA, an emerging auto parts manufacturer in the U.S., will open its newest operation at 400 Parkland Drive in Charlotte, Michigan. Shinwon USA launched U.S. operations in 2019, with approximately 28,000 square feet in Livonia, under its Korean-based parent company, Shinwon Precision. Now, Shinwon USA is growing its molding and assembly operations and serving multiple customers out of a new 50,000-square-foot facility in the Charlotte Combs Industrial Park.

Shinwon USA intends to kickstart pre-production operations in September 2021 by hiring 18 to 30 new positions, ranging from general labor/assembly, machine operators, quality engineers, and production managers.

"Shinwon USA is thrilled to open the doors at our second location in Charlotte," said Gina Blackburn, general manager of Shinwon USA. "We look forward to growing our team as we fill the variety of available positions in the coming weeks."

The City of Charlotte's manufacturing industry is propelling forward at a tremendous pace with Shinwon's expansion now and Shyft Group's massive hiring expansion project announced in January 2021.

"I am very pleased to welcome Shinwon USA to Charlotte," said Charlotte Mayor Michael Armitage. "We appreciate Shinwon's confidence in our community and our workforce. Successes like these demonstrate Charlotte's important role as a manufacturing hub for mid-Michigan, and as a strong location for the automotive and vehicle industry."

"We are excited to welcome Shinwon USA to the tri-county region in Charlotte. To have a new manufacturing company enter our market signals our national and international peers that our region's growth trajectory is positive, steady, and promising," said Bob Trezise, president and CEO of Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP). "This is a project that naturally evolved toward our region. LEAP, Capital Area Michigan Works! and the City of Charlotte were pleased to put the finishing touches on this important project for Charlotte and our region."

Call (734) 469-2550 to contact Shinwon USA about the open positions and hiring process. ●

New 1 Million-Square-Foot Facility to Create Over 500 Jobs in Lansing Region

Amazon.com, Inc. announced plans for significant growth across Michigan. The company plans to build its first mid-Michigan non-sortable item fulfillment center in Delta Township in 2022. The new facility surpasses 1 million-square-feet at the northwest corner of Mt. Hope Highway and Creyts Road in Delta Township immediately west of Lansing. Amazon's substantial investment will add to the robust manufacturing and distribution companies cluster in the immediate area. The fulfillment center will bring over 500 competitively paid jobs to the region, with an average starting wage of \$17 per hour—more than double the federal minimum wage. Additionally, these new jobs will provide comprehensive health benefits, paid time off, up to 20 weeks of fully paid parental leave and more for employees and their families.



Courtesy: Amazon

Amazon cited a talented workforce, welcoming community, and highly developed customer service logistics, among its reasons for choosing Delta Charter Township.

“The Lansing region is a key international hub for innovation, manufacturing and distribution operations,” said Bob Trezise, president and CEO of LEAP. “Not only does our central location in the state offer numerous logistical advantages, but our diverse workforce and our ‘big small city’ quality of life deliver everything a company needs to operate at consistent and efficient levels. We’re thrilled Amazon shares this similar understanding and look forward to this next phase of their investment in the Lansing region.”

The Lansing tri-county region of Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham counties is home to approximately 500,000 individuals, boasting numerous community and quality of life accolades in recent years. Notably, the Lansing region reigns number one in Michigan for labor force growth, ages 16 and up, over the last five years. City of Lansing itself claimed the national prize of No. 1 Best Affordable Place to Live in American in 2018, and Okemos (Meridian Township) ranked No. 8 Best Place to Live in America in 2019. Combining this attainable and fun quality of life with the nearby No. 2 technical college in the U.S. in Lansing Community College and the No. 1 packaging school nationwide and No. 1 school for supply chain talent worldwide in Michigan State University creates a potent recipe for success in a business-friendly environment.

Delta Township is at the forefront of this business-friendly environment, with over 7,000 production and

transportation/warehousing employees alone working in the immediate area (Emsi, 2021).

“We welcome Amazon's expansion in Delta Township. With an over one million square foot state-of-the-art fulfillment center and over 500 jobs coming to Delta Township, this will be good for our region. We also appreciate LEAP who assisted in this effort,” said Ken Fletcher, Delta Township supervisor. ●

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Pictured left to right: Melanie Squires, Jennifer Marsh, Patty Barnas

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NEW HIRES



Oslosky

Triterra is pleased to welcome **Greg Oslosky**, associate geologist, to their team of professionals. Oslosky's role will include managing projects, helping grow Triterra in West Michigan, and providing technical assistance. Greg acquired a bachelor's degree in geology, from the University of South Florida in Tampa.



Brown

LAFCU has named **Nathan Brown** a digital and graphic designer. In his new position, Brown is a member of LAFCU's creative team that produces marketing and member communications for the Michigan credit union. Brown has eight years of design experience, having worked in digital and graphic designer positions, as well as a video producer, and director of photography in higher education and several marketing agencies.

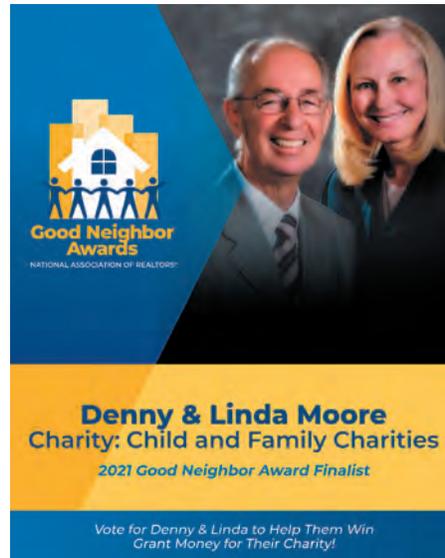


Dupler

Foster Swift Collins & Smith welcomes attorney **Jacquelyn A. Dupler** to the firm's Lansing office as a member of the firm's Family Law Practice Group. Jackie practices in domestic relations, including custody, divorce, and support. Jackie handles a wide range of family law matters, from straightforward divorce cases to difficult family situations involving

substance abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, mental health, co-parenting and financial difficulties. She also handles complex asset and debt issues, such as business ownership, self-employment, and complicated retirement accounts and pensions.

AWARDS



For the 22nd consecutive year, the **National Association of Realtors®** is honoring 10 finalists for its 2021 Good Neighbor Awards Program. The award honors Realtors® who have made significant, tangible volunteer contributions in their communities to improve the lives of their neighbors in need. Winners, as determined by judges, and the Web Choice Favorites will be announced on Oct. 6. The five winners will receive a \$10,000 grant and national media exposure for their charity, including a feature in the fall issue of *REALTOR® Magazine*. The winners will be honored during the 2021 REALTORS® Conference & Expo in San Diego, Calif. Five honorable mentions will receive \$2,500 grants.

DISTINCTIONS

Seven attorneys from the Lansing office of **Foster Swift Collins & Smith, PC** have been selected to the 2021 Michigan Super Lawyers list, while one other has been selected as a "Rising Star". The 2021 Michigan

Super Lawyers; **Charles E. Barbieri, Richard C. Kraus, Scott L. Mandel, Douglas A. Mielock, Patricia J. Scott, Webb A. Smith, and Scott A. Storey.** 2021 Rising Star; **Taylor A. Gast.**

Rehmann, a fully integrated financial services and advisory firm, has been named to The Top 50 Construction Accounting Firms™ by *Construction Executive* for the third year in a row. Companies selected for this honor are chosen based on the strength of their construction practice and ability to guide construction clientele amid ongoing economic uncertainty.

Dickinson Wright PLLC is pleased to announce that three of the firm's attorneys in Lansing have been named 2021 Michigan Super Lawyers and one attorney has been named a 2021 Michigan Super Lawyers "Rising Star". Dickinson Wright attorneys recognized on this year's Michigan Super Lawyers list include **Peter H. Ellsworth, Kester K. So, and Jeffery V. Stuckey.** Dickinson Wright attorneys recognized on this year's Michigan Super Lawyers Rising Stars list include: **Nolan J. Moody.**



Sparrow Eaton Hospital has named **Jeanne Mead, RN**, as its first Nurse of the Year. Mead, an RN care facilitator for Sparrow Eaton's Clinical Integration team, has been a nurse for more than 25 years, having started the Chronic Care Management and Transitional Care Management programs for all Eaton physician practices.

Though **Capitol National Bank** focuses on serving local businesses, Lansing's only community bank is in

the national spotlight after receiving recognition from the Independent Community Bankers of America (ICBA). Capitol National was named one of ICBA's top ten commercial lenders in the "less than \$500 million" category. This is an objective award based on FDIC data that measures the strength of competitive banking services and operational efficiencies. Loan growth and credit quality in 2020 are the primary factors in ICBA's evaluation. Capitol National was the only Michigan bank honored in this category.



Fraser Trebilcock is pleased to announce that attorney **Paula J. Manderfield** has been selected as one of this year's Top 30 "Women in the Law" by Michigan

Manderfield

Lawyers Weekly. The award is given annually to women who are inspiring and accomplished lawyers, who also serve as mentors to others and contribute considerable time giving back to their communities.

Fraser Trebilcock attorney **Thaddeus E. Morgan** has been named the *Best Lawyers in*

America® 2022 Construction Litigation "Lawyer of the Year" in Lansing. This is a high distinction, as only one attorney in each practice area in each community is identified as "Lawyer of the Year."



Lloyd

Doug Lloyd, Eaton County Prosecutor since 2013, was unanimously elected by his peers to be president of the Prosecuting Attorneys Association

of Michigan (PAAM). PAAM is comprised of a 14-member Board of Directors and the Attorney General who represent Michigan 83 county prosecuting attorney offices. He will serve a one-year term through August 2022.

Dickinson Wright PLLC is pleased to announce that seven of the firm's attorneys in Lansing have been included in *Best Lawyers in America*® 2022 edition: **Peter H. Ellsworth, Scott R. Knapp, Peter J. Kulick, James F. Mauro, Ryan M. Shannon, Kester K. So, and Jeffery V. Stuckey.**

Sparrow Hospital has again been verified as a Level 1 Trauma Center,

the only facility in Mid-Michigan to receive such a designation for adult and pediatric patients. Being a Level 1 Trauma Center means Sparrow is equipped to handle the worst of the worst trauma cases, such as victims of car accidents, plane crashes, and the like. Trauma centers such as Sparrow's are very specialized, unique healthcare facilities, and are here 24/7/365 when the community needs them at a moment's notice.

Eighteen attorneys from Foster Swift's Lansing office were selected by their peers for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® 2022. In addition, three attorneys from Lansing were also named *Best Lawyers*® 2022 "Lawyer of the Year." Another was listed as a "One to Watch." *Best Lawyers*; **Charles E. Babrbieri, Scott A. Cernich, Anna K. Gibson, Brian G. Goodenough, Matt G. Hrebec, Charles A. Janssen, James B. Jensen Jr., Richard C. Kraus, David M. Lick, Scott L. Mandel, Thomas R. Meagher, Douglas A. Mielock, David R. Russell, Michael D. Sanders, Jean G. Shtokal, Scott A. Storey, Deanna Swisher and Brent A. Titus. *Best Lawyers*® 2022 "Lawyer of the Year" attorneys; **James B. Jensen, Jr.** was named the *Best Lawyers*® 2022 Corporate**

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Law “Lawyer of the Year” in Lansing. **Scott L. Mandel** was named the *Best Lawyers*® 2022 Best-of-the-Company Litigation “Lawyer of the Year” in Lansing. **Douglas A. Mielock** was named the *Best Lawyers*® 2022 Elder Law “Lawyer of the Year” in Lansing. 2022 “One to Watch,” **Mark J. DeLuca**.

Triterra, a Lansing-based environmental consulting firm, has been recognized on the annual Inc. 5000 list, the most prestigious ranking of the fastest-growing private companies in the United States. The Inc. 5000 represents a unique look at the most successful companies within the American economy’s most dynamic segment - independent small businesses. Triterra joins other well-known companies, including Intuit, Zappos, Under Armour, Microsoft, Patagonia, and others, who gained their first national exposure as honorees on the Inc. 5000.

Dickinson Wright, PLLC is pleased to announce that **Kester K. So** has been identified as the leading practitioner in his practice area as a *Best Lawyers in America*® 2022 “Lawyer of the Year.” Only a single lawyer in each specialty in each community is being honored as the “Lawyer of the Year.” Dickinson Wright PLLC is also pleased to announce that **Nolan Moody** of the firm’s Lansing office has been included in *Best Lawyers in America*® “Ones to Watch” 2022 edition.

For the fourth year in a row, **Sparrow Hospital** and its Comprehensive Stroke Center have received the highest level of recognition for stroke care nationally. For the first time, they have been honored for their care of Type 2 diabetes patients who have had strokes. The Stroke Center has been honored by the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association with the Get with the Guidelines®-Stroke GOLD PLUS achievement award and Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite.

Sparrow’s diabetes program has been recognized with the AHA/ASA’s Get with the Guidelines® Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll.

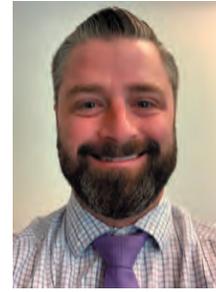
Maner Costerisan, an award-winning, full-service advisory and accounting firm headquartered in Lansing, Mich., received a pair of notable accolades in recent weeks. For the sixth consecutive year, the firm was named one of the “Best Accounting Firms to Work For” in *Accounting Today’s* annual poll. This year, Maner broke into the top-20 list of midsize and large firms across the country (19). Additionally, it was named to the list of the Top-200 Accounting Firms in the country by *Inside Public Accounting* magazine.

Fourteen attorneys from **Fraser Trebilcock** have been selected for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® 2022 in Lansing. Those chosen include **Michael S. Ashton; Douglas J. Austin; Michael E. Cavanaugh; Graham K. Crabtree; Jennifer Utter Heston; Peter D. Houk; Mark E. Kellogg; Elizabeth H. Latchana; Darrell A. Lindman; Thaddeus E. Morgan; Brian P. Morley; Michael H. Perry; Gary C. Rogers** and **Marlaine C. Teahan**.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The **Michigan Diversity Education Center (MiDEC)** is pleased to announce two new board members to their board of directors, composed of individuals committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The following new board members were unanimously elected to the MiDEC Board of Directors after a vote took place on Friday, Aug. 13: **Shelley Davis Boyd**, Michigan Association of School Boards and **Brett W. Sinclair**, Raven & Lotus LLC.

Steve Russell with A/C Electric has been selected as a director for the **Associated Builders and Contractors Greater Michigan Chapter** Board of Directors. The three-year term runs from 2022 – 2024.



Scheuller



Sustrich



Squires

Junior Achievement of Mid-Michigan (JAMM) recently announced new board members, **Chris Scheuller, Melanie Squires** and **Patrick Sustrich**, for

the 2021-2022 fiscal year. Scheuller has served as the senior branch manager of PNC bank for the past three years and has enjoyed a career in banking for the last ten years, having started as a personal banker and advancing throughout the years. Squires has been with First National Bank of Michigan since July 2019 and currently serves as vice president, branch manager, and treasury management. She has over 20 years of banking experience, including branch management, loan officer, treasury management officer and leadership. Sustrich, MS, is the director of retail healthcare at Sparrow Health System, and the former executive director of ALIVE, Sparrow Eaton Hospital’s (SEH) experience-based destination health park.

PROMOTIONS



Kueffner

Mason Public Schools (MPS) has recently named **Craig Kueffner** the new director of student support for the school district. Kueffner will lead and implement social-emotional learning system

development, the growth of summer and before and after-school offerings and serve as the student success resource for staff. Additionally, Kueffner will work with MPS's Diversity Consultant and District leadership to support equity, diversity, and inclusion (DEI) training and professional development for staff as well as ensuring programmatic alignment of the district's strategic plan and DEI efforts.



Wallace

Amy Blaising Wallace, D.O., is now based full-time at **Sparrow Medical Group Eaton Rapids**, adding to the leading-edge patient care provided by **Kimberly Friar, M.D., Julie Coenen, NP, and Jessica Hamel, NP.** Wallace is excited to devote herself to clinical practice after serving as the medical director of population health for Sparrow Care Network for the past three and a half years.



Hilker

Mason Public Schools has recently hired a new assistant principal and athletic director to serve Mason Middle School. **Mary Hilker**, who has spent the last three years

teaching fifth grade at Mason's Alaiedon Elementary, has recently stepped into this role after Craig Kueffner was hired to serve as the district's new director of student support.

COMPANY NEWS

Martin Commercial Properties, the leading commercial real estate firm in mid-Michigan, brokered a deal between The Boji Group and WMU-Cooley Law to purchase the

former Masonic Temple Building in a deal that closed July 30. Cooley has owned the building located at 217 S. Capitol Ave. since 1974. The building has been for sale since late 2014 and was previously used as a conference center and lecture hall for Cooley. Ron Boji, president of The Boji Group, has no firm plans for redeveloping the building, although he believes residential use could be a good fit. He anticipates a total investment of \$20 million to \$25 million and would like to have a redevelopment plan in place by the first quarter of 2022.



Okemos residents now have a new convenient and affordable care option. **McLaren CareNow** at Walgreens, an all-in-one, on-demand health care service delivered in one convenient location, is now welcoming patients inside the Walgreens at 2131W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. McLaren CareNow clinics provide fast, high-quality, and cost-effective care for minor illnesses, injuries, wellness physicals, health screenings, vaccinations, and a wide variety of lab tests—many with in-visit results—including a rapid PCR COVID test. The clinics offer care for cough, colds, sore throats, ear infections, pink eye, sinus infections, sprains, and more.

As people look to post-pandemic self-care, the med spa movement provides them with a way to improve their appearance and boost their confidence. In response, **Douglas J** is launching the Douglas J MedSpa, offering guests new

medical spa services at Douglas J's flagship salon, Douglas J Salon and Spa in Okemos, Mich. The addition will provide clients with medical-grade aesthetic procedures in a relaxing spa environment.



On Thursday, Aug. 19, **Union Bank** Board of Directors, senior management, and officers gathered to break ground on a new corporate office at 670 Cascade W. Parkway SE in Grand Rapids. The 6,500-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility designed by Ghafari Associates is scheduled to open in the summer of 2022. Currently headquartered in Lake Odessa, Union Bank has been proud to call itself a truly local and proudly independent bank with roots deep in West and Central Michigan's soil since 1934.



Kordenbrock

Fraser Trebilcock has launched its eDiscovery practice group, with attorney **Jean E. Kordenbrock** serving as chair of the practice group. Fraser

Trebilcock's experienced team of attorneys have the knowledge and experience to provide their clients with a variety of services such as oversee and manage processes involving third-party eDiscovery vendors, provide counsel on creating legally defensible document retention policies, evaluate technology infrastructures to determine scope of electronically stored information, and provide effective compliance with discovery requests.

Child and Family Charities, a nonprofit in Lansing, Michigan, announced that Child and Family Services of Michigan, best known for their program Operation Good Cheer, will be joining Child and Family Services of Michigan. Child and Family Services of Michigan has been a nonprofit organization in the community for over 100 years, providing services to children and families in need of support. The organization has recently focused their efforts on Operation Good Cheer, a program that provides holiday gifts for over 7,500 children in foster care in Michigan. This year, 2021, marks the 50th anniversary of Operation Good Cheer statewide.

Martin Commercial Properties, a leading privately-owned real estate services and development company, facilitated the sale of a free-standing office building and parcel at 2285 Grand River Ave. in Okemos, Michigan. Martin assisted the sale of the property, adding to the growing list of sales and leases brokered in the Lansing East Submarket along the high traffic corridor in the past year that include All Grand Events, Koi Tea, and Hungry Howies. The buyer plans to repurpose the 1,200-square-foot property built in the early 1970s into a branch office for Capitol National Bank.

The **Ingham County Board of Commissioners** and the **Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP)** announced the first grant recipients of the \$11 million Ingham County Sunrise Small Business Grants Program. Two hundred and sixty-eight small businesses from across Ingham County, which applied for grants in the program's Retail, Goods, and Services and Hospitality and Tourism categories, received grants ranging from \$10,000-\$25,000 based on total employment for a total of \$3,290,000 in grant awards distributed to date. Additional grants in other categories will be awarded in the coming months, including grants for sole proprietors,

nonprofits, new businesses started during the pandemic, restaurants/eateries/taverns, childcare providers, and business incubators.



The U.S. Department of Treasury's Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (CDFI Fund) has awarded **Cinnaire** a \$60 million New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) Allocation. Since 2009, Cinnaire is an eight-time NMTC recipient with awards totaling more than \$419 million. Cinnaire, a nonprofit CDFI serving Michigan and the Midwest for 28 years, also manages an additional \$251 million in NMTC allocation for partner organizations. Over the program's history, Cinnaire has used NMTC investments to finance 42 high-impact projects in disinvested communities with a total development cost of \$1.46 billion.

Each year, **Holt** senior students can participate in Lansing Community College (LCC) courses through the Holt Advantage Program. This program allows students to earn transferable college credit during their twelfth-grade year. Courses are administered and taught by LCC instructors at Holt's North Campus, with wrap-around support from Holt administration and teachers. During the 2020-21 school year, 52 Holt seniors participated in the Holt Advantage Program. Those students earned 343 transferable college credits maintaining a grade point average of 3.48 through these courses. This program saved students over \$42,000 in college tuition.



State Rep. Angela Witwer (Delta Township) was joined by the family of Sgt. William Darnell of the Dewitt Township Police Department, who passed away last year, for the Michigan House of Representatives' annual Sept. 11 ceremony. The event was held Thursday, Sept. 9, at the Michigan State Capitol in Lansing.

The Michigan House of Representatives held a ceremony to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. **State Rep. Angela Witwer** (Delta Township) honored first responder **Sgt. William Darnell** of the Dewitt Township Police Department, who passed away last year. She issued the following statement: "On this solemn day, we remember the incredible courage that our first responders demonstrated 20 years ago. We honor them for the heroic service they perform every day. We can never thank them enough for their tireless efforts to safeguard our freedom."

Are you working in the Lansing area? You have a story to tell and the hosts of the new podcast, *Adventures in Business*, want to hear it. **Lisa Fisher**, owner of Lisa Fisher Associates, and **Amy Zander**, owner of **Zeedia Media**, have teamed up to gather the stories of local workers, employees, entrepreneurs, nonprofit organizers, and all types of people who make up the business force in the capital city. The podcast is being hosted at zeediamedia.com/adventures-in-business where guests can sign up to be featured on the show. You can find all the episodes there, or you can listen to them on iTunes, Stitcher, or wherever you get your podcasts.

General Motor (GM)'s Lansing Delta Township (LDT) Assembly Plant is celebrating its 15th anniversary. First assembling the Saturn Outlook in 2006, LDT now delivers high-quality Chevrolet Traverse and Buick Enclave SUVs. GM's 2021 Chevrolet Traverse, which is assembled at LDT, earned the Top Safety Pick by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS). The Chevrolet Traverse earned top ratings in all six IIHS crashworthiness evaluations. GM is proud of what LDT continues to accomplish as they build a safer world through its vehicles.

Jackson Financial Inc. (Jackson®) announced that it has completed its previously announced separation from Prudential plc (Prudential; NYSE: PUK) through a demerger. Jackson is now an

independent company, and its Class A common stock commenced "regular way" trading under the ticker symbol "JXN" on the New York Stock Exchange on Sept. 20. Jackson is a leading U.S. retirement services provider with market leadership supported by its diverse portfolio of differentiated products, efficient and scalable operating platform, and industry-leading distribution network. Jackson is focused on maintaining a strong financial profile while delivering consistent profitable growth, enabling strategic reinvestment in the business, and returning capital to shareholders.

Affirmant Health Partners' Accountable Care Organization (ACO), Federation ACO, saved Medicare \$22.9 million and will receive a net earned performance

payment of \$8.9 million in shared savings for its members from the Medicare Shared Savings Program in 2020. These results also secured the Federation ACO's number one position of all ACOs in Michigan. Savings earned will be shared with Affirmant's local clinically integrated networks and physicians affiliated with the ACO, including Bronson Healthcare, Covenant HealthCare, Henry Ford Allegiance Health, **Sparrow Health System**, and Spectrum Health Lakeland.

NAI Mid-Michigan is pleased to announce that over the last 45 days, their advisors have assisted clients in leasing over 45,000 square feet of commercial space, selling 70,000 square feet of commercial space and selling nearly 25 acres of vacant land across the Greater Lansing area. ●

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On Sept. 18, the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) joined **High Caliber Karting** at the grand opening of the Double Clutch Sports Bar inside the Meridian Mall. In addition to new activity offerings, there will be 16 lanes of gamified axe throwing with end-grain targets, 13 lanes of throw bowling, an assault arena for Nerf wars or archery tag, as well as two VIP rooms for corporate outings and private functions. High Caliber has continued to grow and become the go-to location for entertainment in Meridian Township! Additional information is available online at highcaliberkarting.com.



On Aug. 26, the LRCC congratulated **Pure Options** with a ribbon-cutting celebrating the opening of their new location at 125 N. Clippert St., Lansing. Pure Options operates Michigan's premier provisioning centers, dedicated to creating a safe environment for learning about how cannabis can help you live your life to the fullest. To learn more, please visit pureoptions.com.



On Aug. 12, the LRCC joined **Lansing Junk Removal** and the **Free and Cheap Store** for a ribbon-cutting at their new location at 1408 Lake Lansing Road, Lansing. Lansing Junk Removal does estate cleanouts, collector/hoarder clean-ups, business office tear downs and removal, and many other removal services.



On Aug. 16, the LRCC welcomed **Pincanna** with a ribbon-cutting for their new location at 1234 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. Their location is the only current location within walking distance to MSU. On top of the ribbon-cutting, there was also a sculpture dedication for Vital Nature by artist Foster Willey.



On Aug. 18, the LRCC held a ribbon-cutting at the Don Johnson Fieldhouse to welcome the new men's professional basketball team. Owner Chris Jackson will be bringing the **Lansing Pharaohs** to the Lansing region starting March 2022. The inaugural season will go from March to May 2022, with playoffs happening in June.



On Aug. 26, the LRCC helped **Michigan Women Forward** celebrate Women's Equality Day and the 101st anniversary of the 19th Amendment giving all women the right to vote. The Michigan Women's Hall of Fame and Historical Center, also known as HERstory, was established in 1983 to tell women's contributions to Michigan's history and inspire the women and girls of tomorrow. The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce is thrilled to help assist with this effort and applauds the museum for all that they do.



A little rain couldn't dampen the spirits of the 150+ attendees for the September Member Mixer held at the **Graduate Hotel East Lansing**, 133 Evergreen Ave., East Lansing. Guests enjoyed the stunning boutique hotel, rooftop views of Michigan State University, East Lansing, and downtown Lansing and the impactful networking and connectivity that members can always experience at Member Mixers. With 6,000 square feet of meeting and ballroom space, the Graduate East Lansing is your business solutions provider. Join us for the Oct. 19 Member Mixer at CarbideX, located at 4520 N. Grand River Ave., Lansing.

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